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Daily Highlights

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F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

+ Secretary-General embarks this weekend on three-week trip, including visits to Switzerland, China, Cambodia, Thailand and India; to chair meeting of Administrative Committee on Coordination in Geneva on Monday, 6 April.

+ Secretary-General discusses Middle East situation with Israeli Permanent Representative.

+ Cambodian Supreme National Council issues statement reaffirming refugees' right to return.

+ Fact-finding mission of United Nations international drug control programme to visit seven countries of Commonwealth of Independent States.

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Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali embarks on a three-week trip this weekend to Switzerland, China, Cambodia, Thailand and India.

He will arrive in Geneva on Monday, 6 April, where he will chair the meeting of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). During his stay in Switzerland, Mr. Boutros-Ghali will receive briefings by a number of his top aides on different topics. Among them are his Special Envoy to Libya, Vladimir Petrovsky; his Special Representative on Bangladesh and Myanmar and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Jan Eliasson; his Personal Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Benon Sevan; and Under-Secretary-General James O. C. Jonah on the question of Somalia.

On Monday, 13 April, the Secretary-General will pay an official visit to Berne.

Starting his Asian trip, the Secretary-General will pay an official visit to China beginning on 14 April. In Beijing, he will also open the forty-eighth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

On 17 April, the Secretary-General is scheduled to travel to Cambodia to review the United Nations operation in that country -- the United Nations

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Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). He will also meet with Prince Samdech Norodom Sihanouk and members of the Supreme National Council.

On 20 April, the Secretary-General will fly to Bangkok for an official visit to Thailand.

The Secretary-General will conclude his Asian trip with an official visit to India, where he will remain until 23 April.

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The Secretary-General met today with the Israeli Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Yoram Aridor. The situation in the Middle East and the peace conference were discussed among other things. Mr. Boutros-Ghali also raised with the Ambassador his concerns at the degradation of the situation in Gaza where four Palestinians were reported killed and several wounded by Israeli security forces on Wednesday, 1 April.

According to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the incident produced one of the heaviest tolls of Palestinian casualties since December 1987.

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The Supreme National Council of Cambodia -- the legitimate body and source of authority in that country -- confirmed today in a statement that all Cambodian refugees and displaced persons who return home would not be subject to persecution on account of their departure from Cambodia, or their status as refugees or displaced persons.

This was one of the conditions specified in the Paris Agreements signed last October by all four factions in the Cambodian conflict.

The statement went on to express the members' particular satisfaction with the successful commencement of the operation for the repatriation of Cambodians in exile and reaffirmed "the cardinal principle of free choice of final destination inside Cambodia".

The statement was issued as an outcome of a meeting of the Council on Wednesday, 1 April, in which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi, and the President of the Council, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, participated.

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A special fact-finding mission of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme began yesterday, 2 April, a month-long visit today to seven countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States -- Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The four-member mission, which is headed by Enrique Parejo Gonzalez, former Minister of Justice of Colombia, will be evaluating the extent of drug abuse and illicit trafficking in those countries.

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The mission is being sent in response to reports of an alarming increases in crime and drug abuse in the republics of the former Soviet Union. It will discuss data collection, prevention measures and treatment with the concerned authorities. The mission will examine measures needed to interdict illicit narcotics cultivation, curb drug trafficking and reinforce control over precursors and essential chemicals used in the manufacture of illicit drugs. Discussions will also focus on ways and means of strengthening the capability of police and customs services.

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